

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 23, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Democratic Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

It has now been 754 days since the Senate last passed a budget. We have less than six months remaining until the start of the new fiscal year and the Senate has yet to produce a basic budget plan to substantively address our grave fiscal crisis. With our nation officially reaching the \$14.3 trillion debt limit last week, we urge you to take the steps necessary to bring a FY2012 budget forward in committee and on the floor for an open, honest, and serious debate.

The voters in the November 2010 mid-term elections spoke loud and clear: the country can no longer afford the status quo or business as usual in Washington. Our fiscal reality is simply too dire. Each day that passes without a federal budget plan is another day in which out-of-control spending jeopardizes America's economic future, national security, and jobs.

Last year, Congress failed to pass a budget, failed to pass any of the twelve annual appropriations bills, and failed the nation by recklessly funding the government on a series of short-term spending bills. The Senate cannot make the same mistake again. It's time for colleagues on both sides of the aisle to demonstrate real leadership and work together to craft a fiscally responsible budget plan. Reducing government spending is not a simple task—it will require strong leadership by individuals who are willing to make difficult decisions. We stand ready to make those tough choices.

All across America, families must find ways to make their family budget work and small businesses must plan within tight budget constraints. With limited resources, they make hard choices to distinguish between wants and needs. The federal government must operate no differently.

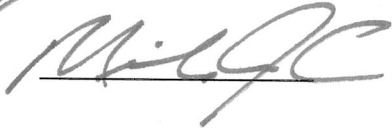
This is the most important budget debate in our lifetime. Future generations will judge us based on the actions we take at this pivotal juncture. As we watch countries like Greece, Ireland, and Portugal forced into severe austerity measures and risking default because of unsustainable spending decisions, we believe it is necessary to reduce our spending and deficits to ensure we do not suffer the same fate.

Given the importance of this budget, we hope you will help ensure a transparent and honest budget process. The Budget Committee's Republican members have asked our Chairman to allow the public to review his proposal no less than 72 hours before the first mark-up and permit ample time for amendments; we would request you support the same transparency throughout the process. We owe the American people an honest budget and an open budget process.

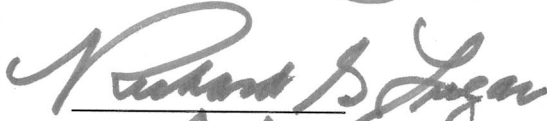
We urge you to work with us to produce a FY2012 budget resolution that makes significant cuts to federal spending and puts our nation on a fiscally responsible path to eliminating our debt altogether.

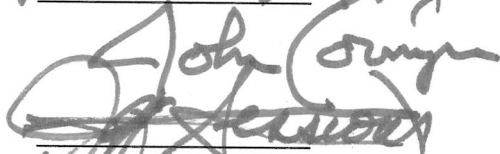
Very truly yours,

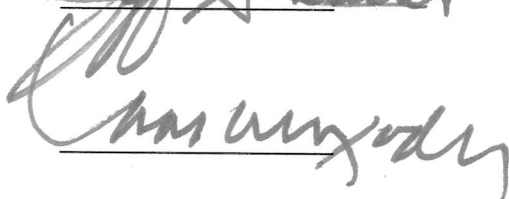
  
Jeff Sessions

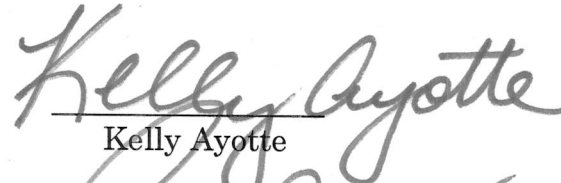







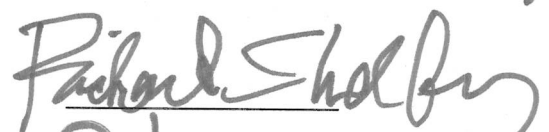


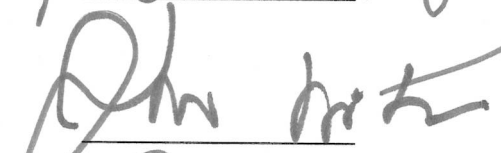


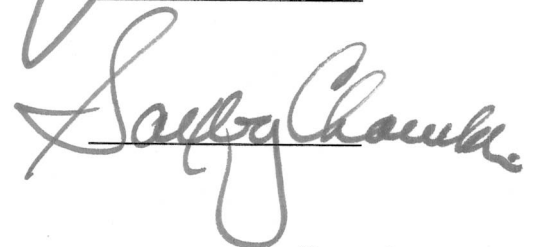
  
Kelly Ayotte











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